of foodgrains for Public Distribution System (PDS), after taking into account factors like monsoon etc. Therefore, there is no need to import foodgrains for PDS. Central Government has no proposal to include pulses under PDS. However, State Governments are free to add pulses for distribution through PDS. The import of pulses is under Open General Licence and the import duty has been reduced to five per cent from the earlier level of ten per cent in order to facilitate imports.

Delicensing of Wheat/Rice Trade by States

32. SHRI TRILOKI NATH CHATURVEDI:
DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI:

Will the Minister of FOOD be pleased to state:

(a) the names of States which are not in favour of delicensing of wheat, rice and other food articles trade in confirmity with the National Food Policy and the reasons given by them;

(b) the percentage of foodgrains lifted by the States in the last three years against the Central allocation; and

(c) whether it is a fact that as a result of the present pricing system, the foodgrains have become out of reach of the population below the poverty line, if so, the steps taken to help this class of population?

THE MINISTER OF FOOD (SHRI AJIT SINGH): (a) Taking an overall view of the food situation, Central Government have requested all the Sates/UTs to remove wheat, wheat products and coarsegrains from the purview of licensing. So, far, only the State Governments of Orissa and Punjab have expressed reservations in de-licensing wheat on account of the existing local conditions. Regarding de-licensing of rice, no decision has been taken.

(b)

	Year	Percentage of lifting against allocation
Rice	1992-93 (p)	81.44
	1993-94 (p)	71.60
	1994-95 (p)	59.79
Wheat	1992-93 (p)	79.90
	1993-94 (p)	61.09
	1994-95 (p)	44.28

(p) = provisional

(c) The Central issue prices are fixed by the Government deliberately below the economic cost keeping in view the interest of vulnerable sections of the population. Central issue prices of wheat and rice meant for RPDS are further subsidised by Rs. 50/- per quintal less than the CIP- for normal PDS. The Central Government also implements the following schemes for the benefit of the weaker sections of the Society:—

(i) Issue of wheat and rice at concessional rate of Rs. 1000 per tonne less than the CIP for PDS to the below poverty line families under the employment generation scheme for manufacturing food products;

(ii) Release of rice and wheat at Rs. 500 per tonne less than the CIP for PDS to SC/ST/OBC/ Hostels, having at least two-third inmates belonging to these categories.

(iii) Release of wheat to Modern Food Industries India Ltd., for bread manufacturing and for production of energy @ Rs. 1000 per metric tonne less than the CIP for PDS subject to reduction of the bread prices by 50 paise for 800 gm. loaf and 25 paise for 400 gm. loaf.